(iv) Court may allow a child to be given in adoption - (a) to a person irrespective of marital status; or (b) to parents to adopt a child of same sex irrespective of the number of living biological sons or daughters; or (c) to childless couples.

Ministry of Women and Child Development through Central Adoption Resource Agency [CARA] and its associated agencies encourages domestic adoption through publicity, advertisements, awareness campaign, etc.

Child death due to malnutrition

1195. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRI NARESH GUJRAL:
SHRI MAHENDRA MOHAN:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of recent malnutrition related child deaths in several parts of the country particularly in Madhya Pradesh;

(b) is so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether the role of NGOs engaged in providing help to undernourished children particularly in Madhya Pradesh have been assessed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) and (b) According to information received from Government of Madhya Pradesh, there are no reported deaths due to only malnutrition. The State Women and Child Department and Health Department are constantly monitoring the causes of death of various children in Anganwadi Centres (AWCs).

(c) No, Sir. However, the State Government is involving International Organizations working for the cause of children like UNICEF, CARE etc. in various activities of the department like Bal-Sanjeevni Abhiyan, Project Shaktiman etc. from time to time.

Stunted and underweight children

1196. SHRI BRIJ BHUSHAN TIWARI:
SHRIMATI MOHSINA KIDWAI:

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the country has the largest number of stunted children and one of the highest number of underweight children below the age of five in the world, according to a latest UNICEF report;

(b) if so, whether Government have evaluated its programmes and schemes launched for the benefit of children;

(c) the reasons for poor progress in this regard as India lags for behind even developing countries in case of children's health and nutrition; and

(d) the steps Government are going to take in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT (SHRIMATI KRISHNA TIRATH): (a) Yes, Sir, keeping in view India's large population base and level of undernutrition in the country.

(b) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

(c) The problem of malnutrition is multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, the determinants of which include household food insecurity, illiteracy and lack of awareness especially in women, poor access to health services, non-availability of safe drinking water, sanitation and environment conditions and adequate purchasing power etc. Besides early age at marriage of girls, teenage pregnancies resulting in low birth weight of the newborns, poor breastfeeding practices, poor complementary feeding practices, ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections further aggravate the malnutrition amongst children. Tackling malnutrition amongst children requires an integrated approach. Prevention of early marriage, appropriate spacing in pregnancy, better Infant and Young Child Feeding Practices including exclusive breast feeding, age appropriate complementary feeding, better hygienic conditions, immunization, Vitamin A supplementation, deworming, Oral Rehydration, Zinc supplementation during diarrhea, timely and quality feeding of acute malnutrition condition, improved nutrition for adolescent girls, prevention of anemia, improved food and nutrient intake during pregnancy and lactation, better information and awareness about nutritional needs and behaviors and prevention and control of diseases would need to be promoted for mitigating the impact of malnutrition. All these need to be addressed on a holistic manner by effective intersectoral coordination, convergence and improved systems of delivery of services under different schemes and programmes of central and State Governments.

(d) The Ministry of Women and Child Development is addressing the problem of malnutrition among children below 6 years through the ICDS in all States/UTs. The scheme, *inter-alia*, provides a component of Supplementary Nutrition which is primarily designed to bridge the gap between the Recommended Dietary Allowances (RDA) and the Average Daily Intake (ADI). The Government has also enhanced the financial as well as nutritional norms for different categories of beneficiaries as follows:

Category	Revised Rates (Per beneficiary per day)	Revised Nutritional Norms	
		Calories (kcal)	Protein (g)
(i) Children (6 months to 72 months)	Rs. 4.00	500	12-15
(ii) Severely malnourished children (6 months-72 months)	Rs. 6.00	800	20-25
(iii) Pregnant women and Nursing mothers	Rs. 5.00	600	18-20

However, malnutrition is a multifaceted and multi sectoral problem requiring coordinated action by various Ministries. The schemes being implemented by different Ministries aimed at improving the nutritional status of children have been listed in the enclosed Statement.

Statement

Schemes and Programmes to improve the Child Health and Nutrition

(i) Nutrition Programme for Adolescent Girls in 51 districts to provide free food grains to undernourished adolescent girls by Ministry of Women and Child Development.

(ii) To promote appropriate infant and young child feeding practices, the National Guidelines on Infant and Young Child Feeding have been developed and disseminated ail over the country. Increased emphasis is given to:—

a. Initiation of breastfeeding immediately after birth, preferably within one hour.

b. Exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months

c. Implementing the Infant Milk Substitute (IMS) Act.

(iii) Nutrition and Health Education: Food and Nutrition Board of the Ministry of Women and Child Development is engaged in advocacy, trainings and generating awareness on important nutrition issues among different level of functionaries and the masses.

(iv) National Programme for Nutritional Support to Primary Education (Mid Day Meal Scheme) by the Department of School Elementary Education and Literacy;

(v) Reproductive and Child Health Programme under the National Rural Health Mission being implemented by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has schemes for prevention of micronutrient malnutrition as below:

- Iron and Folic acid supplementation for children, adolescents, pregnant and lactating women.
- Vitamin-A supplementation for children upto 5 years.
- National Iodine Deficiency Control Programme.

(vi) Targeted Public Distribution System, Antodaya Anna Yojana and Annapurna Scheme by the Department of Food and Consumer Affairs.

(vii) Other measures include:

- Improving agricultural and horticulture produce
- Improving the purchasing power of the people though various income generating scheme

Child welfare committee

1197. SHRI M.P. ACHUTHAN: Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Juvenile Justice (care and protection of children) Act 2000 provides for constitution of a Child Welfare Committee (CWC) in each district;